Abstract

This study, entitled "Kātib al-Sirr in the Mamluk state (Al- Bahriya and Burjia)": An Analytical and Historical study 648-923 A.H/ 1250-1517 B.C., is built on those writers, numbered Forty-Five, in the Mamluki sources beginning with Sultan Al-Mansūr Qalwun and ending with the reign of Sultan Al-Ashraf Tūmān Bāy II during the Ottman Occupation of Egypt in 923 A.H.- 1517 B.C. Here, we traced back this honourable post and its employment and administrative institutions as well as the relations of its holders with the Mamluk Sultan and his court men.

Despite the existence of some studies of contemporary writers who have tackled the subject with explanation of the qualifications of Kātib al- Sirr their writings are still tentative and incomplete for they have not focused upon the importance of this post among others in the Mamluki state and also they did not pay attention to how those writers tried to use money to get this best post. This was especially after the infamous bribe spread among those administrative after the economic deterioration that ruled during the Burjid Mamlukk Sultans.

This study falls into five interrelated chapters. The first is entitled "The Public political and

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Administrative Conditions in the Two Mamluk states- Al-Bahriya and Al- Burjia", Here we tackled the general meaning of Kātib al- Sirr (Private Secretary), as far as its use and usage and its connotations among the social classes of Mamluk Administration. In addition, a short historical account was presented concerning the stages of development of Dīwān Kātib al-sirr before it was so called for it had been called Dīwān al- Waal-Insha (Letter- writing). This is justified by the definition concerning the nature and criteria of its own, and then being transformed into a post during the Mamluki age especially after the extension of the state lands beside its numerous specifications and communications, with special attention given to the foreign that gave so much importance to this working administrative class in sofar as carrying out a special duty to the Sultanate.

The second chapter handled the administrative framework of Dīwān Kātib al-sirr in relation to the qualification of who is to take it as a post the functional reality with its specifications as well as duties and political and administrative tasks, beside the structure of the administrative mechanism- involving heads, assistants and their departments, all these were given attention beside assigning Dīwan

Kuttāb al- Sirr to the different regions in Bilād al- Shām. Further, it was proved how it was in realty so important a part in the Dīwan in Egypt, and here, we passed over the nature of Al- Barīd (Post) administration in the Mamlukī age and its relation with Dīwan Kātib al- Sirr.

In the third chapter, entitled "writings and literary Forms of Dīwan Kātib al- sirr" we dealt with the elements forming the Mamluki Dīwan writing in Egypt and Al- Shām in light of their background during the Tuiunids and Ayyunbids.

The fourth and the fifth, however, covered the work and function of the holders of the presidency of Diwan the Mamluk Bahriya state, besides exposing the families and sects to which those belong who were mainly writers, heads, peace- calling hearts, and men of literature and their contribution in constructing and forming composing terminology. In addition, some samples of writings and correspondence used in the Sultanate were dealt with.

In this exposition, we are going to see how clear is the difference in the number and duty of the holders of Kuttāb al- sirr during the Mamluki Bahriya state Sultans and of those in the Burjia state. This was

tackled mainly in the fifth chapter with a confinement to dealing only with the study and analysis of Kuttāb al- sirr in Egypt, without carrying a similar survey of Kuttāb al- sirr in the deputies of the Sultane in al-shām. This is because of the fact that what Kuttāb al-sirr does in the deputies is in reality another form of what is in Egypt, not to say that in Egypt the holder is the best to represent the career of this post for his direct connection with the Sultan, and the other heads of other civil management offices. Add to this, most of them would always be promoted to the post of private secretary. These members of professional families in this type of work were the raw material of this study for they represented the families and the important high-ran ked people who occupied the post of Kuttāb al- sirr in the Bahriya and then in the Burjia states.

The study showed how important is to investigate this field of Mamuki studies, and also it arrived at some basic results:

The emergence of Title Kaatibus-Sir and the change in the administrative field from Kaatibul-Insha'a to Kaatibu-sir goes back to the time of Qādī Fath al-Dīm Abd al- Zāhīr, son of the famous Muri al-Di- Fathu-Ideen bin Muhee-Ideen bin Abduz-zaahir

Kaatibul-Insha'a in the reign of the Bahris Sultan Al-Mansoor Qalwoon, and then, Kaatibus-sirs came to exist in the Bahrid Sultanate office followed by its deputies.

At the outset, all historical Mamluki sources considered Kaatibus-Sir to be occupied by unusual character who is at first class of the state as well as being number one among colleagues in the other Diwan departments with no exception even the minister who has lost privilages gradually for the benefit of Kaatibus al- Sir.

All in all, Kuttab al-Sir seems to have played an important role in serving the Mamulkid state, not to mention the Sultans, through contributing to help the Sultan to protect the throne and to bear responsibility in conveying and transmitting his opponents' information through his representatives especially his representative in Mamalik al- sham.

Furthermore, the study showed the appearance of competitive administrative schools distinguished for editting messages and Diwān writing that formed the bases in Mamluki State writings, which in use regionally or depended uper locally and in the center nationally. However, these schools were also

characterised by intrigues and conspiracies among each other.

For all of this, this post was a goal for the competition of various men of state, among which writers and judges, and above all the powerful amīrs just to gain the spiritual and material privileges of this post.

It proved to be that almost all Kuttāb al- Sirr of the Mamluki Burjia state were from the ran kop Sālima Jew- Christians who were only employed after submitting the best and highest temptive material offers to the Sultan, not for any other standerds. This especially was the case after the absence of literary efficiency, and eloquence that characterised the employees in the beginning.

Also it was observed that most of Burji Mamluki writers belonged to the judge class, however, some including Dhimmis, have claimed this for the necessity of administrative correspondences related to Kuttāb al- Sirr.

In the age of the Mamluk States (Bahriya and Burjia), Kutab al-Sirr have faced a bitter competition from viziers who were always looking for getting back their administrative positions that they lost because of the elevation of Kātib al- Sir and his

ability in doing what the old viziers used to do in the past who kept his name but changed to carry out a duty of those of financial Super intendent.